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Church Union News and Views

Organ of the Continuation Committee
of the
South India Joint Committee on Union

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CHURCH UNION

News and Views

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REV. J. J. BANNINGA, D.D.

(*Managing Editor.*)

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Vol. II **SEPTEMBER 1931** **No. 2**

Editorials

Working for Union

There can be no doubt that there is a great movement in the world, looking towards Church Union. News comes from America of the consummation of the union between 'the Congregational' and 'the Christian Churches'. England also reports almost unanimous votes in favour of the union of the three branches of the Methodist Church there. This union will probably be consummated next year.

The need to-day is for every one who loves the coming of the Kingdom to seek ways and means for furthering union. Union must become a passion with us. It must take precedence to things that are not central to our faith. Where a scheme does not altogether suit us we must make it perfectly clear that we are working for union even though we ask for certain changes in the Scheme. We should all make it perfectly clear that we want union and are working toward that goal.

Since God wills union we must become co-workers with God in this Movement.

Opposition to the Proposed Scheme

In a recent number of the *United Church Herald* an Indian writer criticises the Proposed Scheme as not fulfilling Section (1) 'So to organize the Church in South India that it shall give the Church an Indian expression of the spirit, thought and life of the Church universal'. He then proceeds to mention four things which are Indian, but which are not found in the Scheme. He says,

(*a*) Freedom is the genius of Indian religions especially in Hinduism.
(*b*) Each devotee in Hinduism can worship God in his own way.
(*c*) In the matter of Creed, Hinduism is very tolerant.
(*d*) There is no rule that only an episcopally ordained priest can officiate in the Hindu temple.

One or two observations should be made with reference to these criticisms. In the first place the criticism is based on the practice of Hinduism. The question arises, 'How far can things essentially Hindu be transferred to the Christian Church'? It may be taken for granted that there is the utmost freedom in Hinduism. This freedom goes so far with reference to Creed, for instance, that a man may be an atheist, a deist, a theist or a materialist. We trust that our friend is not hoping to make the Christian Church in India so 'free' that this kind of belief will be possible in the Christian Church. After all Jesus said 'I am the way, the truth, and the life', and any Christian Church naturally must walk along the way that Christ has trod. A Christian cannot be an atheist, nor a materialist. He must believe in Jesus Christ and in the God whom Christ revealed.

So also with reference to the ministry. We are not so sure about the Hindu priesthood. If we are not mistaken, in most Hindu temples Brahmin priests are necessary. Though they may not claim ordination by bishops they do claim birth which gives them the right to be priests and none except those having this birth may officiate in those temples. This is a *succession* that is not merely dependent upon ordination but is dependent upon birth, a far more serious matter.

There is no doubt a great deal in India that will prove valuable to the Christian Church. But that is probably with reference more to life than to its mere form. Things are changing very rapidly and whereas Hinduism has been based upon the idea of monarchy and the absolute rule of the Head of a Mutt or an Ashram, democracy is gradually coming in, and many of the Hindu temples are controlled by committees instead of individuals. That is in keeping with the times and is in keeping with the 'Proposed Scheme' which provides for Church committees and Diocesan Councils as well as for bishops. The present age demands that any organization shall rest firmly upon the people as a whole who will express their opinion through chosen representatives. This is a combination of

Democracy and Republicanism and, when combined with a permanent head of the organization, includes a certain aspect of limited monarchy also. Each of these three forms of government has something that can be said for it. The best form of Government to-day would probably include some aspect of each of the three. We certainly do not want unlimited monarchy and we certainly do not want unlimited democracy. Representative Government can also go widely astray when the tactics of canvassing and special slates are used. But when all three forms react upon one another we shall probably get the best result.

However it is not the form that counts so much as the spirit, and it is especially in the spirit that India can help to give the expression. A true bhakti and a true asceticism will help very much in the Indianization of Christianity. A very special reverence for the Cross of Christ and a very clear teaching that God is always present everywhere, which might be called a Christian pantheism, would all help to interpret Christ to the people of India. It is for Indians especially to show how these contributions can be made and they will no doubt be welcomed with open arms by every one.

Three-Dimensional Truth

Mathematicians talk about the Fourth Dimension and some of them seem to have a concept of something that corresponds to that term, but most men live in a three-dimensional world. It is true some live in a world of a perfectly flat plane. However this may be, most of of us know what we mean by length, breadth, and height and we are perfectly content to remain and think within those limits.

Religion borrows figures of speech from all realms of life and thought, and therefore it is not amiss to borrow these terms from mathematics in order that we may describe the fulness of Christian life. Paul does, in Eph. iii, speak of length and breadth and depth and height, but we may omit depth from our discussion for after all he is not dealing with a fourth dimension.

We may safely say that any proposition put forward in connection with Christianity should have three dimensions. It does not matter whether the proposition deals with the Church itself, or with its ministry or with doctrine, the value of that proposition will be in proportion to its having full length, breadth and height.

And what do we mean by these terms? Simply this. Length represents history,—the length of time that that proposition has been considered of value. It is perfectly true that a new discovery may be made any day and the fact that it is new does not vitiate its truth. On the other hand a truth discovered yesterday cannot be vital to the life of

Christianity, for Christianity has long existed without it. The longer a certain truth has been held as vital to the life of the Church the more likely it is to be really necessary to that life. This may also be false, as we know, for instance, that men long believed that the earth was flat, but such discoveries of physical truths are not quite comparable to spiritual and philosophical truths which have been known for ages. Such truths are generally valuable in proportion to their length in terms of year.

Likewise a thing is likely to be true in proportion to its width or breadth,—the general acceptance of that truth throughout the world. That is not likely to be true that is held only by a few people in one place. Ubiquity and truth may not be synonymous but that is much more likely to be true that is held by men everywhere, than that believed only in a small circle. Not what one denomination believes or what one country holds, but that which is most generally believed among earnest intelligent Christians is likely to be nearest the truth.

But perhaps height is more important than either length or breadth, for height represents the approach to the very throne of God,—spiritual truth. It certainly is more important that something should have God's approval now than that it had man's approval all through the ages or all round the world. The best is when a proposition has both God's and man's approval at all times and in all places, that is, when it has three dimensions. It would be well if we could examine all proposals in the light of these three dimensions.

Articles

Action of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (Boston, Mass.), on Church Union in S. India

Officers and Members of the Madura Church
Council of the South India United Church
Dear Friends,

The American Board desires to acknowledge the receipt of the Proposed Scheme of Union (Revised Edition of 1930) forwarded to it by the Madura Mission at the request of the Madura Church Council. As suggested in the Scheme itself and in the covering letter of Dr. Banninga, we have given it careful and prayerful study. We have submitted the Scheme to many representative leaders of the Church in America and have had their replies before us in formulating our opinion.

We rejoice with you in the continued evidence of the presence and leading of the Spirit of God as you have gone forward with plans for union with the Southern Dioceses of the Church of India, Burma, and Ceylon, and the South India Provincial Synod of the Wesleyan Methodist Church. It is a matter for profound thanksgiving that the co-operating committee, overcoming many obstacles that stood in the way, has been able to prepare a Scheme that gives strong promise of furnishing a basis of a spiritual as well as an organic union between these Churches. The significance of this achievement can scarcely be overemphasized. We earnestly desire to co-operate with you in carrying it forward.

With the principles underlying the proposed union as they are presented in the first sections of the Scheme, we find ourselves in complete accord. The co-operating committee declares unequivocally and strongly for a union of comprehension, in which the varying gifts of the uniting Churches may all have place. It expresses the purpose to maintain the relations of communion and fellowship which are now maintained by each of the uniting Churches with other Churches. It seeks to guard the consciences of the participants against being overridden by any action of majorities in the proposed united Church. It relies upon the continued guidance of the Spirit of God in solving the many problems and entering the many opportunities of the proposed united Church. With all this we heartily agree. We also recognize that the historic episcopate in a constitutional form as defined in this Scheme is necessary to such a union, and believe that our American Churches will be ready to continue their co-operation with the united Church under an episcopal organization.

It seems to us that the Committee is wise in inviting from those who are involved either directly or indirectly in the plans for this Church still further suggestions. So far as we are concerned, the decision of these matters must rest with the Church in India, yet because of your desire and our own that American Churches should continue to have a close relation with the proposed united Church, and because of the tendency which is already manifesting itself to regard the South India Scheme as a basis for similar negotiations in other parts of India and of the world, our Churches have a vital interest in the provisions of this plan. We are, therefore, taking this opportunity to express ourselves in regard to some elements in the present draft which might raise questions in our Churches and make less spontaneous and effective their continued co-operation. What we are writing is in the nature of impressions and questions rather than settled opinions. We are too far away to come to any definite conclusions. Yet we do want to suggest possible ways in which some alterations in the plan might make it a better instrument for the accomplishment of its purpose of comprehensive union.

The first suggestion which we desire to make is in line with recommendation No. 9 of the South India United Church, which the joint Committee was unable, for lack of time, to consider at its last meeting. This Recommendation reads as follows:—

> THAT with a view to reassuring those in the Church who are afraid that within a short time after the union the Synod might by a majority take action which would be contrary to the principles which at the time of union belong to one or other of the uniting Churches, it is hereby declared that it is contrary to the intention of those who make the union that any question on which the uniting Churches as such are divided or have differing practices (such as admission to communicant membership) be brought up within thirty years from the date of the union.

This subject is also dealt with in a general way in parts of Section IV B of the Scheme in the following sentences:—

> 'It is equally the intention of the uniting Churches that the united Church shall in its legislation and executive acts respect the conscientious convictions of its ministers and members.'
>
> 'If during this process difficulties and anomalies arise, the united Church will be careful not to allow any overriding of conscience by Church authorities or by majorities; nor will it in its administrative acts knowingly transgress the long-established traditions of any of the uniting Churches.'

Matters which would come under these provisions would include any requirement that the historic creeds must be a part of public worship or that presbyters must subscribe to them in any more specific way than that proposed in Section VII (3) of the draft Scheme; namely:—

> 'Every person about to be ordained in any diocese of the Church will be required to affirm his sincere belief in the truths witnessed to by the Nicene Creed.'

As the South India United Church said with admirable clearness in its statement for the Lausanne Conference in 1927, it is a part of the fundamental spirit of this Church to place ultimate reliance not on any formulation of belief, however ancient and however valuable, but rather on the ever-present Spirit of God and His leading. An use of the Nicene Creed as a witness of Christian truth seems to us justifiable and valuable. We note, however, that the Synod has authority to draw up further standards for its presbyters. In accordance with this provision the Synod might require of its presbyters a verbal affirmation of the Nicene Creed. In our judgment such a requirement would do violence to the spirit of the Scheme and, in particular, to the assurances of Section IV which we have quoted. A way to make specific in this connexion these assurances might be, first, to add under Section VII D words similar to the explicit provision

contained in Section VI (6):—'It is not necessary that, in answering questions with regard to their faith, candidates for baptism should use the actual words of either of these Creeds in affirming their belief,' and second, to add to the second paragraph of Section IX D, the words 'or require it', making the last phrase read as follows:—'No authority of the United Church may forbid their use or require it.'

In the second place, as we read through the Scheme, there seems to be some discrepancy between the statement of underlying principle of the earlier sections and the actual constitutional provisions of the latter ones. In the earlier sections the importance of the contributions to be made by each of the uniting bodies and the value of variety of expression are emphasized. In the later sections, on the other hand, there is a tendency to look forward toward uniformity of practice and to provide for a high degree of centralization in control. A comprehensive plan of union should, in our opinion, recognize a degree of diversity in organization and practice not only as a necessity for union, but as a definite good to be fostered. We hope, for instance, that the united Church would not look forward to developing a single form of the Communion Service as the draft suggests, but would continue to recognize the validity of different forms. We also hope that the intricate provisions for dealing with matters of faith and doctrine that come to the Synod may be modified in the direction of simplicity and greater control by the Synod. The religious history of India seems to indicate that Indians desire the maximum of local freedom with a minimum of central machinery. The Scheme in its present form seems to us to embody western ideas of central organization rather than the more distinctive Indian idea of spontaneity of expression, and we, therefore, question whether it carries out in the best way its purpose 'so to organize the Church in South India that it shall give the Indian expression of the spirit, the thought and the life of the Church Universal'. We would suggest for the consideration of the Committee the possibility of simplifying the central organization in favour of larger liberty in the different dioceses.

It seems to be intended that in the initiation of the united Church those who are now diocesan bishops will retain their present jurisdiction, while new bishops will be elected by a body representing the three uniting Churches. The present bishops have been appointed to their dioceses by an organization outside of the proposed union. We clearly recognize that it is essential to the plan of union that the status of these bishops as bishops of the united Church should be taken for granted. It is not clear to us that it is necessary that their present jurisdiction should be so taken for granted. It is obvious that the union would start on a more even basis if the existing diocesan bishops should resign their present jurisdiction so that the representatives of the three uniting Churches might have, from the start, a voice in determining the jurisdiction of all the bishops. It seems to us quite con-

ceivable that the united Church, if it could survey the entire field, might decide that one or more of the present diocesan bishops could serve the united Church more effectively in some other capacity, say in the training of ministers, than in his present work. On the other hand, the Church might reassign them to their present dioceses. Even though such an act as we here suggest were no more than a gesture, it would seem to us to be highly valuable both for the present diocesan bishops and for the uniting Church, since it would mean that in a very real sense all the bishops of the Church would be the chosen agents of that Church. The real question that we are here raising is whether some means cannot be devised whereby the three uniting Churches may actually have and may feel themselves to have more nearly an equal voice in determining the jurisdiction of its bishops. If something of this sort can be done, it seems to us that it will add very greatly to the sense of spiritual unity of the proposed united Church and, in particular, to the feeling of the members of the two non-episcopal bodies that the present bishops are really their bishops, to whom they are united by spiritual as well as ecclesiastical bonds.

In conclusion we desire to assure you once more of our deepest interest and sympathy as you go forward. You have well expressed the source and motive of Christian union in the following statement:—

> 'Jesus Christ is the Person in Whom Churches unite. His life and death and ever-living presence must be central in the thought, life and devotion of each member of the Church as in that of the Church as a whole. His Cross is the place of meeting. The united Church will, therefore, desire to bring together all the different types of spiritual experience represented in the uniting Churches, and to keep together in the one Brotherhood those who emphasize the individual experience of the Christian heart, those who place the Cross in the centre of their worship, investing with every solemnity of ritual the sacramental presentation of the great act of man's redemption, and those who bid the Church take full account of all new knowledge of the world which God's Spirit imparts to the human mind by channels other than those of organized religion.'

It is our prayer that the union of all His followers in Christ may become increasingly effective and power-giving, and that your efforts in South India may be richly blessed to this great end.

Your brethren in Christ,

(Signed) ROCKWELL HARMON POTTER, D.D.,
President of the American Board.

ALDEN HYDE CLARKE, D.D.,
Secretary for India.

Memo. of Replies to Communication on Church Union in South India sent by the American Board (Boston, U.S.A.) to Leaders in America.

Lloyd L. Lorbeer.—'I heartily favour your letter except that I hope the Prudential Committee will not be so slow and cautious that the opportunity for a great advance is lost. "Our doubts are traitors and make us lose," etc. The important thing is not the letter of the scheme but the spirit of the men who unite to build this larger church. I know these men led by Bishop Azariah. They have my complete confidence. Of course we need caution. But even more we need faith. May the officers and Prudential Committee give their blessing full and free to every effort that the people of India are making to build an ever larger and larger church of Christ in India!'

Rev. Ralph R. Keithahn.—'I would tend to agree with your basis for union—a basis broad enough to allow the Quaker to enter. I do not believe that this does and so I should not be able to join it myself.

'It does seem to me that the scheme is so rigid that it does not provide for the complete witnessing of the Spirit in days to come. And I fear that there will be a schism sooner or later.

'I think that I could go most of the way myself in the Union except for Section III—Basis of Union—Faith and Order. And as a result of my contact with three of the outstanding Theological institutions in U.S.A. whence many of our candidates for the foreign field come (Yale, Union and Chicago), I doubt whether most of the men could accept the "Basis of Union" as their own. I do not accept the Apostles' Creed and the Nicene Creed "as witnessing to and safeguarding that faith" completely. Those creeds grew out of debates and discussion of centuries ago and I feel they are inadequate for our age. I believe that most of our liberal Seminaries would tend to give us that attitude. And if that is so, then the American Board must face a real problem as she sends out men and women to work in connexion with the new United Church. Although I do not believe in an "Episcopal" church as the best expression of the organization of the Spirit, yet I believe that I could work in it and would gladly do so for the sake of union.'

Rev. Charles W. Miller.—1. 'It must be recognized that the movement for union with the Anglicans and Methodists has been growing over a period of years and that it represents mutual understandings and fellowship which it is impossible to translate into words on paper. . . . The fact that the great majority of the Indians *want* to come together, and

probably *will* come together in spite of anything we say or do, should have considerable weight in delivering our comments.

2. 'The paper statement naturally represents a very conservative theological position. That is characteristic of our Indian position on the whole. Even in our "Congregational" Councils and Churches there is very little expression of the liberal point of view. . . .

3. 'It is manifest to me—whether in our congregational circles or in the wider church union—that growth into a larger point of view will necessarily be gradual and come in two ways. (*a*) Pressure from within, (*b*) Pressure from without.

4. ' . . . On the whole I believe that the movement will tend to strengthen the whole church's tendency to look more broadly on her influence and her service in Indian life.

5. 'These statements are, of course, disappointing to a liberal mind. But we can be thankful that they are not more extensive and they do actually represent years of compromise in order to find a basis as simple as possible.

6. 'The episcopate to my mind represents hardly more than our present practice in the Madura Mission chairmen of Councils. The new bishops have this advantage. They do not wield any financial power—a distinct step *in advance* so far as we are concerned. . . . By all means send in your suggestions in regard to this Scheme, but do not try to stand in the way of fulfilment.'

Rev. William Paton.—'I am personally quite convinced and happy about the South India Scheme. I do not think that there is the danger of the excessive centralization that you fear. It may seem a paradox, but one of the reasons why I am inclined to accept the sort of episcopacy which is proposed is that I believe it is easier to achieve variety without laxity if your centre is personal than if it is something in the nature of a committee or an assembly. I think that a bishop is more likely to be able to make room for not merely variety in worship, but large variety in types of service, e.g. ashram and sadhu, than our system does. At bottom, the Anglican pressure is not so much for centralization as an idea of organization with the acceptance of the bishop as a necessary part of the whole. . . . As to the suggestion you make that all the existing bishops should resign so that their jurisdiction should be settled by the United Church, I can see no objection to this in principle, and I think it would be ideally acceptable to the existing Anglican bishops. There may be a practical difficulty. . . . I am sure that the spirit of what you propose would be entirely acceptable to men like Waller, Azariah, Western and Moore.'

Dr. Frank Sanders, Chairman of the Commission on Inter-Church Relations, in an article to appear in the June *Missionary Herald* approves in general of the South India Scheme and offers no criticisms of it.

Rev. Charles E. Burton.—'If on hurried reading of your proposed communication to the Indian brethren I were to express myself I think it would be along the line of being a little more non-committal. Our English brethren, if I understand them correctly, are opposing the plan rather vigorously. Your communication does not read much enthusiasm into approval, but it does put the stamp of approval upon the plan, with request for some modifications.

'Clearly it is not the kind of a scheme that Congregational churches of the United States would enter into; in fact, it seems to be a fairly complete surrender of Congregational principles; such principles, for example, as self-determination in the organization of church, in the ownership of property, in the management of church affairs, in the determination of its own creed, in the selection of its officers, and particularly its pastor, in the ordination to the ministry, in the election of members, in the discipline of members; in fact, under the proposed scheme the church itself seems to have very little, if any, control of its own affairs. On the contrary the scheme seems to provide for a kind of autonomous Episcopal Church.

'As you indicate in your letter, I suspect the only thing to do is to let the Indian people determine these questions for themselves. The only question which remains for the Board is as to whether it would continue its support for the church work under those terms or whether it ought to say that being an Episcopal Church, the support should come from the Episcopal churches of the world.'

Rev. William E. Strong.—'The Plan does not provide for sufficient liberty and variety in the working out of organization. It should face the expectation of less uniformity as the years go on and the Plan works out, instead of more. The case of making the affirmation of the Nicene Creed a requirement of ordination is clearly contrary to the spirit which should guide in affecting the Union and, if insisted upon, binds the Union most unfairly and unwisely. A creedal statement so specific, precise, and controversial, ought not to be nailed down into a Plan of Union such as is contemplated. Moreover, you do well, I think, to call attention to what seems to be the excessive authority given to the Bishops. . . . But all I wish to do is to express my general and hearty approval of the draft of your letter, my hope that you will give clear and frank statement to changes and modifications you (as the A.B.) feel to be required, and that the Indian churches and their leaders and officers may work out a Plan of Union that shall find a sincere and even enthusiastic acceptance.'

Rev. C. H. Patton.—'I have just read the draft report of the Foreign Policy Com. and I find it contains the very point of view I had in mind, viz. caution in respect to the use of the Nicene Creed. I personally could never unite with a Church which emphasized that creed in the way the plan of union seems to do. And I feel much the same way, although less intensely, about the Apostles' Creed. Their language is open to various interpretations at this point. Just what is involved in the witness of a creed, and in a creed acting as a safeguard of doctrine? Congregationalists can comfortably yield in the matter of bishops as an administrative measure, so long as they are selected in a constitutional way, but in the matter of an authoritative creed, how can we possibly go back on our principles and history? It troubles me that this whole plan emphasizes as a basis of union the very things Christ did not emphasize, viz. organization and creed. He, if anything is clear in the N.T., made everything in the church hinge on a personal relation to Himself. "Follow me." Are we headed for a reversal of that point of view? Is ecclesiasticism or faith to be brought to the front? I cannot get away from the impression that ecclesiasticism has had the right of way in the negotiations thus far.

'Recurring to the Nicene Creed, can any of our people tell us specifically if it is intended to rule out from ordination a minister who does not believe in the Virgin Birth, or one who is doubtful on the subject? If so can we advise our people to go in? Are we likely to have permanent and vital union on that basis? . . . . I am so strong for union that short of denying the essential liberty of the body of believers, I stand ready to make any sacrifice. The India scheme is wonderfully liberal in the matter of not requiring any particular ritual, and in recognizing the validity of existing orders. Why not go a step farther and make this liberty cover the formal assent to creeds? . . . . I think the report as drafted is excellent in form and spirit.'

President A. W. Palmer.—'I have gone over the proposed scheme of union carefully and feel that it contains elements of great peril. While in general I believe in Christian unity, I think also we have some responsibilities for preserving the freedom for which our ancestors paid so great a price, and I feel that these proposals are very likely to bring us into bondage again by their requirement of creed subscription and by their placing in the hands of the bishops such great power of controlling the determination of even the consideration of certain matters by the Synod or general council of the church, whatever it is called.

'I also distrust the thirty-year provision and feel that as an evidence of good faith and genuine Christian comity, the plan of union should specify something like this: "It is the purpose of the United Church to remain permanently in fellowship with all the denominations represented in it, and to give full recognition to their ministry, hoping thus to lead the

way to a time when such brotherly intercommunion and recognition shall characterize all those who call themselves Christian the world around." '

Rev. Dan F. Bradley.—'My reaction to the proposals is completely unfavourable. It seems to me that therein has been surrendered much that Congregationalists have stood for as important for three centuries. We are asked to accept the myth of the "historic episcopate", as something sacrosanct and essential to Christian faith. We are asked to organize the new church to be formed on an episcopal basis. We yield the ordination of ministers to the episcopate. They control worship and practice. The Nicene and Apostles' Creeds with all their glaring errors and anachronisms are to be the basis of the Church's faith. In all this the local church is dropped completely out of sight. Its existence is not even assumed. I do not see how the American Board can advise acceptance of this plan, unless it is completely rewritten to give the local church final authority as to Creed, Polity and Practice.'

Miss Elizabeth J. Hurlbut.—'As I read the Plan of Union it seemed to me to tend inevitably toward a set form of belief and government, but I suppose that it can be kept elastic if the leaders hold fast to the original idea. However, if it is really the desire of the Indian leadership of the churches we Congregationalists ought to aid them enthusiastically in this forward step in National church growth. But I cannot help wondering if it is not in reality the idea of the Western members of the committee prevailing either because of their dominating force of character or habit of leadership. A church so western in form and so closely connected with the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon would seem to me to make no appeal to the almost supersensitive Indian in this critical period of National development.

'These are just a few points I would like to have you set me right on when you have time. They have no bearing on the letter to the Church in Madura. As a member of the P. C. I think it is fine in spirit and wise in its suggestions.'

President Edwin B. Dean of Doane College.—'It may be that India must pass through what we have experienced in development through the years; but if some restrictions could be avoided and the Indians could come naturally into the simple religion of Jesus, that would be far better. I hope some of these requirements may be modified if the conditions in India will permit. Personally, I wish they might have the freedom of the Quakers to admit those who accept spiritual baptism without water provided they declare their loyalty to Jesus. You make a good point in suggesting that the Bishops resign and receive new appointments as the Synod may decide.'

Rev. Raymond Calkins.—'It looks as if this church in India were blazing the way for the possible union of the English-speaking church throughout the world. If the ideas of Episcopacy and of free church organization can be integrated anywhere, they can be everywhere. I have

been waiting for years for some practical demonstration of this possibility and South India seems to have stepped out in the front. I am excited about it beyond anything which has reached me lately. . . . Thank you for letting me see what I consider the most remarkable document relating to church unity which has ever come into my hands.'

Herman F. Swartz, President of Pacific School of Religion.—'The thing upon which my mind dwells is, however, deeper than the form of organization. I will have to confess that with my interest in church union and my belief in the propriety of union in South India I am still not exactly in a happy mood regarding this particular set up. I cannot escape the feeling which seems to me has appeared frequently enough in the wording and I am sure is in the background of the thinking, that the union is as it were the Church of England as party of the first part and everybody else as party of the second part. It is not a union of Congregationalists and Wesleyans, but a union of the two of us with Episcopalians. The result of the union is not only a form which makes of all of us but a sequence to the Church of England after a period of at most thirty years, but it presupposes that the underlying psychology of the English Church is the goal toward which all minds should be turned.

. . . . 'First of all the Church of England bishops come over bodily not only into the ministerial membership but into the Episcopal chair. You have done right in pointing out this infelicity. I assume that it did not even appear to the Church of England constituents that this continuing of the present set of bishops, chosen not by the people of India but by others, was any infelicity. It simply is a continuation of the Church of England having some authority over some more people who have lately been taken in.

. . . . 'I am particularly uneasy over the creedal fixity which is implied if not definitely stated in the prominence given to the Apostles' and the Nicene Creeds. Some of us have long hoped that the church in India would make a genuine and rich contribution to Christian life and thinking, and I am entirely willing that any man who wishes it may regard the Nicene Creed as the best statement thus far developed concerning Christian metaphysics. I would hate awfully, however, to see this formula clamped down on the young church in India with anything like the rigor that is applied to the churches which have inherited the Greek and Roman traditions.

. . . . 'The total effect, therefore, of the plan of union would make me wonder whether it constitutes a really forward step in the development of the Christian Church according to the finest genius of India. It looks like a compromise of three western denominations about how to run the exotic church in India. It is the sort of union that we might fight over in Illinois. While, therefore, I should vote in favour of it, I find myself

unable to develop any such measure of enthusiasm as I should like to give to the land toward which I look with great hope. . . . .'

Dr. J. S. Chandler.—'The spirit of union essential to the validity of any such scheme seems to me to be vitiated by the attitude of the different parties in regard to three important features of the proposed scheme, viz. "the historic episcopate in a constitutional form", "any Christian body which is not in communion with this church" and the "use of the Creeds in worship". There must be a double meaning underlying these expressions. The Anglicans mean by "historic episcopate" nothing less than apostolic succession, as shown by their unwillingness to substitute for it "constitutional episcopate", even to the extent of withdrawing from the scheme. Of course, others may hold it in a different sense. But any such double sense weakens the spirit of union in maintaining it. . . . .'

The Eastern Orthodox Church

The Western churches have been so long separated from contact with the Eastern churches, that the majority of people in the West know very little of their teaching and of the ideals. Now that there is a revival of enthusiasm and definite approaches for closer fellowship are being made to the West, it is only right that we should inform ourselves accurately concerning them. And accurate information cannot be obtained from second-hand criticisms by members of churches which are out of sympathy with or definitely opposed to them. We should read such books as *The Eastern Orthodox Church* by Stefan Zankov, Professor of Ecclesiastical Law in the University of Sofia, for first-hand information.

Apart from the remarkable renaissance which the Eastern church is experiencing at the present time, its very existence is a miracle which ought to be considered: for when Muhammadanism overran the East, it conquered every country (except Russia) in which the church existed. If we are tempted to dwell on spiritual weaknesses, we have to remember that the great majority of its churches have been living for a thousand years under conditions of passive or active persecution. That its members have time and again faced death and starvation rather than give up their faith is a wonderful testimony both to their faith and to the power of the Spirit of God. To take only one instance, the Armenian massacres which excited the dismay of the West some forty years ago, were due to the obstinacy with which these down-trodden Christians clung to their faith.

To turn to the present time: there are twenty autonomous orthodox churches to-day: (1) Patriarchate of Constantinople (300,000, mostly Greek: (2) Patriarchate of Alexandria, 50,000 (two-thirds Greeks): (3) Patriarchate of Antioch, 250,000, mostly Arabs: (4) Patriarchate of Jerusalem,

33,000 Arabs (under Greek leadership): (5) Archbishopric of Cyprus. 250,000 Greeks: (6) Russian Patriarchate 120,000,000 Russians: (7) Patriarchate of Serbia, 60,000 Serbs: (8) Patriarchate of Rumania, 13,000,000 of whom 800,000 are Russians and 400,000 Bulgarians: (9) Church of Greece, 5,000,000: (10) Church of Bulgaria 5,000,000: (11) Church of Poland, 5,000,000, all Russians: (12) Church of Georgia (Russia), 275,000: (13) Church of Albania, 120,000: (14) Church of Finland, 60,000, half Russian, half Finn: (15) Church of Esthonia, 22,000, two-thirds Russian, one-third Esthonian: (16) Church of Latvia, 240,000, two-thirds Russian, one-third Letts: (17) Church of Lithuania, 75,000: (18) Church of Czechoslovakia 250,000 of whom 200,000 are Ruthenian, 50,000 Czechs: (19) Russian Orthodox Archbishopric of North America, 250,000 Russians: (20) Archbishopric of Japan under Russian leadership, 35,000 Japanese.

There are therefore over 150,000,000 Christians, almost entirely Eastern who are upholding the faith of Christ in many lands: they are divided into twenty autonomous churches, which within the general life of the church, are free to manage their own affairs in their own way. They do this through the system of synods or church councils similar to those which we use in India. They have passed through troubled times. We have all read of the terrible persecutions the orthodox church is suffering at the hands of the Bolsheviks: but M. Zankov tells us that the persecution has, as often, purified the church; and that the free fraternal contact with the Protestant Churches, which is so marked a feature of the present day, is helping forward the renaissance which is surely coming.

Many people consider that the Orthodox church system and doctrine is practically Romanism, without the Pope. Without pausing to pursue the theme that Romanism *is* the Papal system, M. Zankov would entirely deny this. Orthodoxy is neither a little less than Romanism nor a little more than Protestantism. It is not by such comparisons that we shall understand the Eastern churches. He finds the distinctive principle in 'the Johaninne idea of the Incarnation of the Logos, or more exactly in the unique union between God and man in "dual entity" ': and this principle is the essence both of its faith and of its life.

The church calls itself Orthodox because it considers itself the direct heir and true conserver of the old holy church of the Apostles and Fathers. But this claim refers to the original Christian inheritance of the basic truths for which the whole church has always stood. In other matters it claims and exercises complete freedom for development.

It founds its teaching on the Bible: it maintains the dogmatic decisions of the first seven œcumenical councils: and it has of course many more or less authoritative treatises and articles but they are not binding in the final sense. The only 'symbol' which is obligatory on the church is the creed, which we call the 'Nicene'.

We may take it then that in a 'scheme of union' the Orthodox church would ask for exactly what we have agreed in our preliminary statement, the Bible and the Nicene creed.

The doctrine of the church is worthy of study by all who are interested in the subject. The foundation is the union of God and man in Christ: there is no other dogma because the church is the Body of Christ, the God-man. It is an organism in which are united in one the God-man Christ and all those souls who have been saved by Him, united so really and mystically that He is the divine-human Head and they are His Body or members of His Body. The church is not merely a 'society' or a 'community' or a league. It is the mystical body of Christ: and this mystical union with Christ is realized in the sacrament of the Eucharist. The church of course includes all believers who remain here on earth, all those who have passed the veil of death, and the angels. All are joined together in prayer and love: all work together with God for the salvation of the members. The church includes even sinners for these are to be gradually made holy and perfect through love: and it is the church's duty to seek out the wandering and the sick, accept them into itself and from them create one holy people of God.

As with individuals, so with other churches outside the Orthodox. There are rigid theologians who hold that non-Orthodox Christians are outside the pale: but the bulk of opinion holds that the church is *one* and embraces all who have been baptized in Christ. There may be erring or ailing bodies of Christians as there are ailing and erring individuals. But these divisions are not absolute: they do not reach as high as Christ: and so the church prays for 'the peace of the whole world, for the welfare of God's holy churches and the union of them all'. The Orthodox Church then has never, like the Roman Church, unchurched all other bodies. As regards the ministry, it follows from what has been said that the ministers are not the 'proprietors' of the gifts of grace. They are the servants of God in most holy things and shepherds of the souls of the faithful but they are still 'only servants, unworthy and sinful, among the most sinful of God's servants' and they perform the liturgy and direct the sacraments only as instruments of God: it is not they who administer the grace of God to the faithful but God Himself'. As an illustration of this, in baptizing, the formula is not 'I baptize thee' but 'the servant of God—is baptized etc.'

In the ministry they have the grades bishop, priest and deacon. Among themselves the bishops are all equal; the patriarch is only *primus inter pares*: the system is synodical.

The bishop is set over the clergy in liturgical and disciplinary matters but he acts with them in all important matters of diocesan government: and the priests elect their representatives to the Supreme Church Councils and Ecclesiastical Supreme Courts.

The laity participate in all phases of church life: they direct all the not purely spiritual or liturgical affairs of the parish: they elect the officials from the priest to the patriarch: they form a majority in the Supreme Councils. In most councils the greater part of the business is decided by a simple majority: in important spiritual questions (e.g. dogma) unanimity between bishops and lay members is required. The laymen often preach at the services.

From all this it will be seen that the principle of the Body of Christ is carried out into the organization: and as M. Zankov says, the orthodox church 'avoids the danger both of hierocratic absolutism and of ecclesiastical nihilism and atomism'. Its spirit is seen in the climax of the Eucharist when the words resound 'Let us love one another, that with one accord we may confess the Father, Son and Holy Spirit'.

This review has exceeded its limits. M. Zankov has interesting chapters on the cult (the worship of the church) and on the piety and activity of the church, its devotional life and its outward activities: but we must leave our readers to study these for themselves. And we earnestly hope that the subject will be more and more made available because the most unfair judgments are often hastily adopted about these persecuted churches, which need all our love and sympathy and not our criticism.

The Wesleyan Conference and Church Union in South India

The Wesleyan Conference which met in 1930 received 'with profound thankfulness' the Proposed Scheme of Union for South India, and while authorizing the South India Provincial Synod to continue the consultations with the representatives of the other churches concerned, the Conference also instructed a Joint Committee of the Missionary Society and the Committee on Faith and Order to continue their consideration of the whole scheme and report to next Conference. The Conference of 1931 has just met in Birmingham and the interim report on the South Indian Church Union Scheme was presented by the Rev. W. J. Noble.

The Committee asked the Conference to agree that organic union was desirable in the highest interests of the Church in South India, but they went on to say that the scheme had not caught the imagination of our people in South India and particularly of the Indian ministry; and that they regarded that as a most desirable preliminary. The Report asked the Conference to say strongly that they held the view that presbyters should take part in laying on of hands with Bishops at the consecration of a Bishop. The Conference was further asked to agree with the South India Provincial Synod that it is eminently desirable that intercommunion should precede and not merely follow union.

The report also asked the Conference to declare that the Methodist Church in England would continue to regard the work which had begun by itself in South India with deep concern and interest and would continue to give to the work in men and money what had been hitherto provided. Mr. Noble emphasized the fact that many of the practical difficulties which would arise on the consummation of union had not yet been solved. It is not easy, for example, to see how exactly it will work out that the Methodist Church shall send men out to the South Indian Church to be ordained there and thereafter to be in full communion with the Church of England while the church which sends them out is not.

Mr. Noble stated, however, that the report and its adoption carries the scheme a step further and at the same time it expresses the concern of the Conference at what it regards as the provision of certain necessary safeguards.

The motion for the adoption of the report was seconded by the Rev. F. L. Wiseman who said that they did not desire to 'lord it' over anybody's faith, and consequently the Report made it perfectly clear to their fellow ministers that if they desired to carry on their work in association with other churches, they themselves must be the final adjudicators. If that was what was required in the interests of the kingdom of God they would pray that the divine blessing might be with them. But if they were setting up on their own responsibility in this association with others, it did seem to some members of that Conference, not that their own view should be forced, but that they should make quite plain what that view was. They wanted to say what they in England would feel if many of the proposals were being made to them.

The view of the Church represented by what was known as the 'Catholic Order' did not cover all the views of the church for which good grounds could be found in the New Testament. Those who held these views would regard the Bishop as the first among equals, and if the new church was setting men apart to the order of Bishops, the Committee held that it was fitting that not only Bishops should take part in the ordination, but that the whole ministry should be represented in the ordination. They further held that whatever grace was communicated in the act of ordination would be communicated as much from the ordaining company as from the Bishop. That, they believed was the Methodist Opinion and they had suggested that in the ordaining and setting apart of Bishops, the Presbyters should always be represented. If this view seemed controversial, it was not controversial inside the Methodist Church. By Methodists it had been held all along and they set it forth in order that their friends might safeguard themselves. They had to think, not of the present only, but of the whole Christian community in fifty or a hundred years time.

The debate which followed shewed very keen interest and real sympathy with the scheme in general, though some concern was expressed as to its practical implications in the relations between the Missionary Society and the new United Church. Mr. Noble emphasized the fact that to many of the questions raised no answer could be given at present as all the detailed implications of the Scheme of Union had not yet been worked out.

South India was represented in the Conference by the Rev. J. S. M. Hooper of Madras who said that it was a great pleasure to note the way in which the Conference was receiving the report. There was, they might rest assured, no desire to rush the matter in any undue way. The Wesleyan missionaries in South India were in full possession of their Commissions to preach the Gospel and if they should see any obstacle to preaching the Gospel they would feel it to be their duty to do their best to get rid of that obstacle. There was no doubt that the presence of so many rival and apparently hostile churches was an obstacle to their work. He reminded the Conference of the background of their life in India. Were they not stressing the unifying fact of Jesus to the people of India? They rejoiced in that, but there was another side. Indians were watching to see if Jesus Christ was strong enough to solve sectarianism. Jesus could reconcile East and West, Brahmin and outcaste. Could he reconcile Christian sects? That was the question. He who could do the greater, could he do the less? That was what they must not forget. That was the background to all their conversations. Much had been said of Anglican exclusiveness. They were conscious of that—so were the Anglicans: but he would like to remind the Conference of the tremendous distance their Anglican brethren had come in getting near to them. That was evidenced in the later reports. The specific Methodist contributions were going to be carried into the United Church—including liberty of communion with all who at present had communion with them. They were at the moment of union transforming an exclusive church into an inclusive one. It was his most earnest hope that the Conference would give its blessing to and follow with its prayers the labours of those who desired to continue these conversations.

With a few minor modifications the report as presented was adopted by the Conference.

At the Pastoral Session of the Conference, which is entirely ministerial, the modified report was later adopted unanimously. At the Pastoral Session debate two representatives of Northern India were present and spoke on the attitude of North India to the South India Scheme.

The Rev. A. E. Brown of Bankura College, referred to the possible danger of the church at home losing interest in the work merged in the new United Church, lest matters which were of vital interest to that Church should cease to be of paramount interest for our conference at home.

The Rev. A. J. Revnell described the way in which North India is following the lead of South India and referred to the two North Indian Union Conferences which had been held in which the Methodist Episcopal Church, the Baptists and the Quakers (none of whom is concerned with the proposals in South India) took part.

He expressed appreciation of the sympathetic way in which the Conference had received the Report and urged its adoption on the ground that it would strengthen the hands of their brethren in India.

The adoption of the report marks another stage in the progress of the South Indian Union Scheme. That the Wesleyan Conference in general is deeply in sympathy with the movement has been made abundantly clear in these debates. It is taking the matter seriously and is already concerned about the practical difficulties involved in the working-out of the scheme and its committee will proceed to give its mind to these problems.

The Church Union Conference, Trivandrum

This Conference, organized at the time of Rev. Fr. J. C. Winslow's visit to Trivandrum in last February, has been meeting from time to time with a view to exploring the possibilities of bringing together the three Churches in Travancore—the Jacobite, Mar Thoma, and Anglican. The Conference was an informal one composed of members belonging to the three Churches. At the very outset the Conference felt that since there are a large number of points on which these Churches are in agreement serious efforts should be made to educate the people on the points of agreement and on the great need of better understanding and closer co-operation and fellowship among the Churches. With this object in view the Conference drew up the following recommendations.

1. The Churches should recognize one another.
2. Except for reasons of faith and never without the written consent of the ecclesiastical heads concerned should any Church accept members from the other. (This clause is a corollary of 1.)
   N. B. Such an understanding is in existence between the Mar Thoma and Anglican Churches.
3. The educational institutions of the Churches should be placed under a joint board elected by the constituent Churches, and their future activities should always be decided upon, created and governed by that board.
4. Institutions for imparting theological training, for ministering to the sick, for propagating the Gospel, for the relief of the poor and the like should be placed under a common board.

5. Provision should be made for joint conferences of (*a*) Clergy, (*b*) Teachers and (*c*) Students and united conventions for the other members of the churches.
6. St. Thomas' Day should be celebrated unitedly.

The Conference took up for its immediate action the last recommendation which appeared to be the easiest to begin with in the present circumstances. St. Thomas' Day was celebrated on July 16, 1931 in the Jubilee Town Hall, Trivandrum, under the chairmanship of Mr. K. Chandy, Retired Member of Mysore Executive Council. The members of all the Churches participated in the function. We are glad St. Thomas' Day afforded a common platform to all of them.

At the meeting of the Conference, held on July 19, the following resolutions were passed unanimously :—

(1) That a Retreat for the Christians in Trivandrum (Seniors, higher class students, and clergy) be arranged and that Rev. Fr. J. C. Winslow be approached to provide a leader.

(2) That the S.C.A. of this area be requested to provide for discussion on Church Union on the programmes of their Camps.

(3) That an appeal be issued by the Conference to the Heads of Churches to observe with us the first Sunday in Chingam, 1107 (M.E.) i.e. August 23, 1931, as a special day of prayer to intercede for the healing of the dissensions in the Syrian Church with particular reference to the Jacobite Church and to pray for the union of the Churches.

(4) That a membership register of the Conference be opened forthwith enrolling all those in Trivandrum who are in sympathy with the object of the Conference.

I am glad to note that our meetings are eminently characterized by the spirit of goodwill and the desire to understand sympathetically one another's point of view. We believe that the Spirit of God is guiding our deliberations. We rely on the prayers and support of all in our humble efforts.

K. A. MATHEW,
Secretary,
The Church Union Conference,
Trivandrum.

August 15, 1931.

Church Union in North India

It may be remembered that in November last the second Round Table Conference on Church Union in North India met at Delhi. It was a small but very comprehensive gathering, the delegates representing every sort of ecclesiastical standpoint from that of the Anglo-Catholics to that of the Society of Friends. Two representatives of the movement for Union in South India also attended and gave full information as to the present position there. A Continuation Committee was appointed to which was entrusted the duty of forming special committees to study and report on particular aspects of the Church Union problem. The following representative committees have now been constituted, and work has already been begun :—

No. I. On the Church : its Ministry and Organization.

1. Rev. A. W. Buckley, Wesleyan Church, Simla, interim Convener.
2. Rev. S. K. Mondol, Methodist Episcopal Church, Bolpur, Bengal.
3. Rev. Canon B. H. P. Fisher, S.P.G. Mission, Cawnpore.
4. Rev. John Drake (Baptist Church), River Edge, Saharanpur, U.P.
5. Rev. Dr. J. W. Bowman, United Church of Northern India, Saharanpur, U.P.

No. II. On the Church and its Sacraments.

1. Rev. P. N. F. Young (Church of India), Chaplain, 2 Raj Narain Road, Delhi, Convener.
2. Rev. A. L. Sircar, Baptist Mission, Khulna, Bengal.
3. Rev. A. Sanderson, Wesleyan Church, 5 Napier Road, Lucknow.
4. Miss Edith M. Backhouse, Friends' Mission, Sohagpur, C.P.
5. Rev. A. Ralla Ram, United Church of Northern India, Jamna Mission, Allahabad, U.P.

No. III. On the Church and its Faith.

1. Rev. Dr. Yohan Masih, United Church of Northern India, Canadian Mission, Indore, C.I., interim Convener.
2. Rev. Canon S. K. Tarafdar, Church of India, Bhagalpur, Bihar.
3. Rev. H. J. Sheets, Methodist Episcopal Church, Bareilly, U.P.
4. Rev. L. Bevan Jones, Baptist Church, 5 Egerton Road, Lahore.
5. Rev. T. N. Hill, India Mission Disciples of Christ, Jhansi, U.P.

The suggestion was made in Delhi that a united conference between representatives of North India and representatives of South India might help to unify the two movements and secure a more satisfactory result in the end. That suggestion was readily accepted in South India. Representatives have been appointed both in South India and in North India, and as soon as place and time mutually convenient can be arranged, the proposed conference will be held.

A. R. LOW.

North Tamil Church Council

RESOLUTIONS ON CHURCH UNION SCHEME

The following records were placed before the Council.

1. Scheme of Union.
2. General Assembly amendments 1929.
3. Report of the Joint Committee on Union (Ninth Session).
4. Report of the Joint Commission of L.M.S. Congregational Unions of England and Wales, and Scotland and Welsh Independents.
5. N.T.C.C. Amendments of 1930.

Resolution 1. Resolved that the four chief Principles of the Basis of Union be considered.

Episcopacy. After much consideration the N.T.C.C. passed the following resolution.

Resolution 2. This council cannot accept the resolutions No. 4 and 5 of the Joint Committee Report of November 1930 as a satisfactory definition of Non-Episcopal Ministers, and until the basis contains an explicit statement that the United Church while accepting the practice of episcopal ordination as essential to a valid ministry of the word and the Sacraments this Council cannot accept a scheme of Union which insists on the adoption of the 'historic episcopate' as a basis for union.

Creeds. This council re-affirms its resolution of 1930, viz.:

Resolution 3. That they accept the Apostles creed and the creed commonly called the Nicene creed, as witnessing to and safeguarding that faith which is continuously confirmed in the spiritual experience of the church of Christ and as containing a sufficient, but not necessary statements thereof for a basis of union.

The Sacraments. Joint Commission Report (p. 9) xi.

The N.T.C.C. agrees with the recommendation made by the Joint Commission, viz.:

The Scheme provides [VII. I. C. (i)] that none except presbyters and bishops have the right to celebrate the Holy Communion. We take it that this rule is made in the interests of order, and not because the efficacy of the Sacrament depends upon a special mode or agent of administration. In our view the efficacy of a Sacrament depends upon its being received in faith, hope and love towards the present Lord who imparts His grace. In this matter of Sacraments we feel the need of special care lest arrangements rightly made to suit the conscience of one of the uniting bodies should ultimately have the effect of wounding the conscience of the other two. We offer the following suggestions:—

Since the above rule is one of order, the following exceptions could properly be made.

(*a*) Sacraments might be celebrated by ordained ministers (Presbyters) from the parent churches receiving authorizations from bishops as laid down in VII. I A (4).

(*b*) They might be celebrated by laymen to whom the church in its discretion gave authority, *e.g.*, in cases where otherwise, owing to the local conditions, the Sacrament might have to be omitted for long periods together.

Such a provision would be in keeping with the existing practice in certain districts, which could not be discontinued wthout giving ground for disquiet. It would also serve as a practical expression of the principle of the S.I.U.C. which does not commit itself to the position that Episcopal ordination is the dividing line between a 'valid' and 'invalid' ministry.

2. In IX-B, which enumerates elements which will be constituent parts of every communion service there should be added an explicit reference to the general principle laid down in III-E. 'The United Church must retain for its congregations freedom either to use historic forms or not to do so as may best conduce to edification and to the worship of God in Spirit and in Truth.' The principle should logically apply to liturgical forms which may later develop as well as to such forms inherited from the past.

The council accepts also the Resolution 22 in the Ninth Session of the Joint Committee on Union as it is reported in the Appendix, page 13.

I. 'Of communicants and ministers in the United Church.

(*a*) Any communicant member of the united Church is at liberty to communicate in any church of the united Church; and any minister of the united Church is at liberty to minister and celebrate the Holy Communion in any church of the united Church, subject only to the terms of the pledge. [Section IV-B. (3).]

(*b*) Any communicant member of any Church which is in fellowship with any of the united Churches is at liberty to communicate in any church of the united Church.

(*c*) Any minister of the united Church is at liberty to minister and to celebrate the Communion in any church of a Church with which any of the uniting Churches enjoys relations of fellowship, if he is invited to do so.

(*d*) Any minister of a church with which the united Church has relations of fellowship, is at liberty to minister or to celebrate the Holy Communion in any church of the united Church, if he is invited to do so, subject to the provisions of the pledge for the protection of conscientious scruples. Section [IV-B. (3)].'

The above two resolutions were put to the vote and carried.

The power of the synod [Sec. VII-C. (7)] viz.,

'That in regard to the powers of the Synod (V) after the Bishops have stayed action in the synod as in Sec. VIII-C. (7) the matter thus stayed

shall be dealt with in accordance with the principles laid down in Sec. XIII-A.'

The council requests the General Assembly to give their full attention to the following statement of the Joint Commission :—

(See Report of the Joint Commission, Appendix, page 12).

Powers of the Bishop. Joint Committee Resolutions ninth session Res. 12, 13, 15.

The N.T.C.C. reaffirms its resolution passed in 1930, viz. :

Instead of the assembly's resolution No. 6 the council agrees with the recommendations of the Wesleyan synod.

(1) That there should be in the constitution clear definition or limitation of the powers of the bishop, including his right of veto and his part in the reception and stationing of ministers.

(2) That authority should be given to the Diocesan Council to express its opinion at regular intervals to the synod as to whether it is in the interest of the work of God that its bishop should continue in office.

D. P. DORAISAMY,
Secretary,
North Tamil Church Council.

Kanarese Church Council

RESOLUTIONS ON CHURCH UNION SCHEME

The Kanarese Church Council had before it the Revised Edition of the Proposed Scheme of Union and the Report of the Joint Commission appointed by the London Missionary Society and the Congregational Unions of England and Wales and Scotland. The Council having considered these two documents, passed the following resolutions and agreed that they be sent to the Convener of the Committee on Union of the General Assembly :—

The Creeds. We desire that the use of the Creeds should be optional, that freedom of interpretation be allowed, and that they should be always subordinated to the less formal and more experimental expression of the Christian faith in the Scriptures of the New Testament.

Episcopacy. We desire that the term "Historic" in connection with the episcopate should be entirely omitted from the Basis of Union. Section III (B) concerning the Episcopacy in the United Church needs to be rewritten, e.g.

(1) "accept in particular the historic Episcopate in a constitutional form" should be changed to "accept episcopacy in a constitutional form".

(2) No. 3 of this sub-section should be omitted.

We, however, agree to the arrangements proposed for the consecration of Bishops. The consecrating Bishops may be in "Historic succession". But we shall accept the bishops who are consecrated not because of their "historicity" but because they are duly chosen and consecrated according to our constitution. In this connection we would reiterate a resolution passed in our council a few years ago, that, in our opinion bishops and presbyters belong to the same order.

We regard the participation of presbyters in the consecration of bishops necessary and not merely "permissible". The note to Section VII. Part I (B) 7 suggested by the Joint Committee in its Resolution No. 19 (of Nov. 1930) needs to be re-worded.

In our opinion a candidate for ordination should have the right of laying his application before a body including both the diocesan bishop and presbyters, if the bishop for any reason cannot recommend him.

Ministry. If we are to keep our long and living connection with the Congregational Churches in the West, it is essential that the Congregational ministers coming into the area of the United Church for a visit or for missionary service should for *all time* be regarded as ministers of the United Church and no limitations be placed on their ministry among those churches in the United Church that have connections with the Congregational Churches in the West.

Sacraments. We desire that these two exceptions to the general rule about the celebration of the sacraments be adopted:—

(*a*) Sacraments might be celebrated by ordained ministers (presbyters) from the parent churches receiving authorizations from bishops as laid down in VII, I. A. (4);

(*b*) They might be celebrated by laymen to whom the church in its discretion gave authority, e.g., in cases where otherwise, owing to local conditions, the sacrament might have to be omitted for long periods together.

Position of Women. The council would reaffirm its resolution of 1930, i.e.:—We desire that in the United Church there should be greater scope for the service of women. At present women preach, help in the administration of the sacraments and serve on all courts of the church. We wish that the United Church of India should not lose their services in these capacities.

JONATHAN ABEL,
Secretary,
Kanarese Church Council.

Proposals on Church Union

Accepted by the Malabar Church Council at its meeting on Aug. 25, 1931.

N.B. The revised edition of the Scheme has been taken as the basis of the deliberations.

1. As the Malabar Churches are in themselves a Union-Church having been founded by the Basel Mission which is supported both by Lutheran and Reformed Churches, they earnestly support whatever leads to a wider union with sister churches, provided that the Union will be a real one and does not involve any sacrifice of principle.

They regret that they were not in a position up to now to contribute their share to these deliberations.

But they welcome heartily the attempt contained in the *Proposed Scheme of Union* to come into wider fellowship with the Church of India Burma and Ceylon, and the Wesleyan Church.

2. The Church Council assents to the *Proposed Scheme of Union* (with the exception of the alterations noted below) with the understanding that the full communion now enjoyed by the Malabar Churches with the mother churches in Europe and sister churches in South Kanara and South Mahratta with which they are connected by bonds of history and doctrine will in no way be broken or hindered.

3. While consenting to the acceptance of the Episcopal form of church government, the Council feels that the implications contained in the term 'historic episcopate' cannot be accepted by it. As it is said that this term simply denotes the fact of the ancient order of episcopal government in the Christian church the Council trusts that this term can be replaced by a word which expresses this fact without these implications.

4. The Council agrees that eventually every indigenous minister of the United Church be an episcopally ordained minister. At the same time it feels that there should be certain permanent exceptions accepted in the Scheme itself by which non-episcopally ordained ministers of churches with whom the United Church is in full communion are accepted as permanent ministers of the United Church provided they assent to the basis in full communion with all the respective mother churches, will be fulfilled.

5. In the Malabar Churches the ministers as the shepherds of their congregations are administering the rite of Confirmation. The right to continue this custom should be preserved in the United Church.

6. As in the consecration of a bishop one of the presbyters is consecrated for a special office, presbyters should take an integral part in every consecration of a bishop.

7. As the proposals about the lay-ministry are not given in detail the Council feels unable to express an opinion on this point.

8. The Council hopes that these suggestions can be incorporated in the Scheme so that it may be able to give its wholehearted support to it.

Calicut.
August 25, 1931.

A. STRECKEISEN,
E. W. THAYIL,
A. J. ARANGADEN,
Church Union Committee, Malabar Council.

How do the Churches in England regard the Scheme for Church Union in South India?

It has been my privilege during the last twelve months to take part in many meetings and committees in England and Ireland where the Scheme of Church Union was carefully considered and discussed, and perhaps my impressions may be of interest to readers of this Magazine. It must be remembered that they are purely personal.

While on deputation work in many parts of England I had many opportunities of bringing our South India Scheme before several audiences. The facts that led to the formulation of the Scheme and its exposition were always listened to with great interest, and in cases, where opportunity was given, pertinent questions were asked and hearty approval of the movement shown. It was evident that the conditions of our work in South India have only to be clearly expounded to secure the interest and approbation of nearly all who desire the coming of God's Kingdom in India.

My deputation work was chiefly among the Wesleyan Methodists, but I found in other churches a strong desire to know the facts that led to the formulation of the Scheme. I was visiting relatives in the north of England who attend the services of the Anglican Church. At a parish concert I was introduced to the vicar, who on learning that I was connected with the union movement invited me to preach in his church the following Sunday morning and expound the Scheme, which I gladly did. There were other offers to preach in Anglican churches, of which I was not able to take advantage. These facts revealed to me that a great change has taken place regarding the relations between the Churches in England, largely I should think as the effect of the Appeal to all Christian People issued by the Lambeth Conference of 1920.

Of the larger English churches the Congregational Church is probably farthest removed from the Anglican in polity and ritual, and many ministers and members of that Church look by no means favourably on our South India Scheme. Opportunity was afforded me to meet large numbers of Congregational ministers in Manchester, Liverpool, and Sheffield, to whom

I had the privilege of expounding the Scheme. Time was allowed for questions and discussion, and it was evident that some had read and carefully studied the Scheme. The questions referred chiefly to the historic episcopate and the powers of the bishop in the united Church. One soon finds that however much care is taken in formulating a proposition, it is astonishing what things an agile and antagonistic mind can read into the language that one regarded as clear and unambiguous. Questions asked enabled me to remove misconceptions and set forth what most of those who formulated the Scheme meant by the 'Historic Episcopate'. This failed to satisfy some, who had no place for bishops in their church polity and who thought too much power is given to the bishop in the Scheme. There was an evident desire to understand the Scheme, and the general question of church union has undoubtedly the approval of ministers and church leaders. But there were some who had reluctantly to say that in spite of all that could be urged in its favour, they could not see their way to support the Scheme. It was impressed on me that a great deal of spade work has to be done in England among the churches through ministerial and church meetings to bring home to Christians the teaching of the New Testament on the unity of the Christian Church. Christians have got so accustomed to their divisions that they ignore what Christ prayed for, the Apostles taught, and the Church practised for so many centuries. It is, however, manifest that denominationalism and with it church membership have not the hold on the members of the churches they formerly had, and to the non-church goer the divisions of Christendom are meaningless. Within the various churches so many changes in polity and doctrine have taken place in recent years that the question is being forced upon the attention of thoughtful leaders in the churches, 'Why should we remain apart?' There may be every justification for many of the separations in the past, but the causes have in many cases been completely removed, and thoughtful men are asking, 'Why cannot we come together?' There are influences and organisations in England working and praying for the removal of prejudices and misconceptions and preparing for co-operation and union.

A visit to Dublin and the meetings I attended there were to me very encouraging. The Protestant churches of Ireland are not organically connected with the South India churches, but many are interested in the movement. The Rev. J. E. Neill, who for many years was a missionary in Madras and keenly interested in union, arranged for a meeting of representatives of the churches in Dublin to meet me and consider the Scheme. The Dean of Christ Church Cathedral presided, and there were present ministers of the Church of Ireland, of the Presbyterians, Methodists, Friends, and other Churches, as well as many laymen, to whom it was a pleasure for me to show what had led to the formation of the Scheme and

to enunciate the principles underlying it. The discussion that followed and the questions asked revealed a large amount of sympathy with the movement and only a slight trace of doubt regarding it.

One result of the meeting was that I was asked to meet the ministers of the Presbyterian Church working in Dublin and its neighbourhood and expound the Scheme to them. A meeting was arranged, and I was glad to tell the story of the making of the Scheme and unfold its chief provisions. Considerable interest was aroused, and there are those in the Presbyterian Church in Ireland who will work for union. An opportunity was given me one Sunday morning to bring the subject before the congregation of one of the chief Presbyterian churches in Dublin. In addition to this a meeting was held one Sunday evening in one of the principal Methodist churches in the city, at which a missionary from China told the story of what is being done in that country to unite the churches there, while I described our efforts in South India. I was also privileged to bring the subject before some of the students of Trinity College as well as before some young people belonging to the Society of Friends. From my experience in Dublin I realized that the time is at hand when the Protestants of that ancient Christian land, so rich in Church History, should draw closer together.

It was in my own Church that I was able to do most in making known our South India Scheme. As the Wesleyan Methodist Church is one of the three churches that joined in forming the Scheme, the home church is more intimately connected with the movement, and while I cannot say there is a strong and general desire for union, yet I found that men and women were greatly interested when the Scheme was explained; and while many pertinent and searching questions were asked and some doubts and prejudices raised, the general feeling was that though the Scheme might not be possible at present in England, nothing should be done to hinder the churches in South India from coming together. The question was generally looked at from the ecclesiastical and English standpoint, and many objections were forthcoming to union in England, yet when the Scheme was expounded from the South India standpoint, little could be urged against it.

The Wesleyan Conference had necessarily to examine the Scheme, and the question first came before the Conference of 1929, though it had not been officially sent from India. A discussion took place, and the Conference referred the subject to the Committee on the World Conference on Faith and Order and the Foreign Missionary Committee jointly, which would report to the Conference of 1930. It was my privilege to attend the meetings of this Committee, which dealt with the general question of union in South India rather than with the details of the Scheme. All were agreed that union is desirable and ought to take place, but this

concrete example was too difficult to be dealt with in detail, and the Committee reported that organic union was in the interests of the Kingdom of God in India, and that the Scheme 'indicates a hopeful way of achieving a united Church in South India,' provided certain modifications were made. This report was presented to the Conference of 1930, and I anticipated that there would be opposition, because during the year objections had been raised in the Methodist papers. On the contrary no voice was raised against the report, but it was characterised as lacking 'warmth and colour'. As a result the resolutions were recast and the Scheme received with 'profound thankfulness'. The Conference rejoiced at 'the spirit of union which the Scheme manifests', and authorised the South India Provincial Synod to continue consultations with the other churches. A Committee was appointed to examine the Scheme and report to the Conference of 1931.

It was again my privilege to attend two meetings of this Committee, when the Scheme was examined in detail, together with the ninth report of the Joint Committee and the various resolutions passed by the Synods in South India. At the first meeting the intercommunion and the historic episcopate were discussed, but we did not go far. At the second meeting we went through the Scheme and sundry suggestions made by the Indian Synods were approved and emphasised. The strongest objection raised to the Scheme by a few was that it provided for different views with regard to the ministry. Is the ministry evangelical, or sacramental, or both? The contention of some is that a Church that attempts to combine both views must fail. The alterations made by the Joint Committee in November, 1930, were before us, and it was felt that the question was fairly well safeguarded. The report of the Committee to Conference was favourable, though I have not the exact words before me.

The Conference that has just met received and adopted the report of the Committee with some changes. There was considerable discussion on certain parts of the report, but as far as I can gather from the Methodist papers, the resolutions as amended were unanimously passed. It will be possible later to give the exact wording of the resolutions. The Conference approves of union and assures the South India churches that 'before any scheme of union is accepted, every care will be taken to secure as far as possible that the financial interests involved will receive full and adequate consideration. The Conference shares the hope of the Joint Committee that the existing relations of communion and fellowship between the Churches in South India and the Churches in Great Britain and Ireland will be strengthened rather than impaired by the proposed union, provided that the Scheme in its final form is found acceptable to our Church.'

A word must be said with regard to the effect of the action of the last Lambeth Conference on the Free Churches in Britain. The way in which the representatives of the Eastern Churches were received gave them impres-

sion that the bishops were more anxious to unite with those Churches than with Protestants. Many spoke and wrote as if the Lambeth Conference had withdrawn from the position it took up in its Appeal to all Christian People in 1920, because there was little reference to the movement towards union in Britain. Suspicion, misconception, and prejudice have been revived in the minds of many, and after the publication of the Lambeth Conference Report it was evident that another atmosphere had been created, and it was not so easy to advocate union with the Anglicans. But this will pass, and I believe that the negotiations suggested by the Archbishop of Canterbury will remove misconceptions and prepare the way for more cordial relations between the churches in Britain, though union may still be far off. Our Scheme of union may be helpful, and I trust the Free Churches in Britain will stand for those things that the Free Churches in India have stood for in the preparation of the South India Scheme.

My own impression from my experiences in England and Ireland briefly is this—There is admiration and thankfulness that the South India Churches have been bold enough to formulate the Scheme. It is to most so new and novel that they are not prepared to give it definite approval. Great interest has been aroused in the minds of many, though no widespread eagerness for it is manifest. The predominant thought is, 'How will it affect us here in England?' and not 'Is it suitable for South India?' Of the conditions there they are largely ignorant. Though the British churches are not keen on the Scheme, they realise that union will undoubtedly help the Kingdom of God in India, and they conclude that if the South India churches desire to come together, they should not be hindered. This is the attitude that supporters of missions generally adopt.

H. GULLIFORD.

The Kanarese Field

There are few parts of the South India area affected by the Proposed Scheme of Union in which union will be so easy and, when effected, will involve so little change, as in the Kanarese country. The three consulting Churches all have work in the Kanarese field, but it happens that the work of the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon in this field is comparatively small. The English churches in Bangalore, Mysore, Coorg, Bellary, and perhaps other places, will come under the provisions of the Scheme set forth in its twelfth section, all the congregations of maintained churches in these places, and the chaplains of the Indian Ecclesiastical Establishment becoming congregations and ministers, respectively, of the united Church. The congregations will be represented and the ministers will sit in the assemblies of the united Church, and the Constitution of

that Church will be binding upon them, as upon other congregations and ministers in the united Church, with the special exceptions noted in Section XII.

The work of the C. E. Z. Mission in Bangalore and Mysore is now carried on with so large a measure of the goodwill of the Nonconformist missions in its neighbourhood that a closer union will be the most natural thing. In no other mission in the Kanarese country is there any work of the kind which the C. E. Z. Mission does, so that there is no possibility of any overlapping or of any clash of interests.

The relations existing between the S.I.U.C. and the Wesleyan Methodist Church and Mission are most cordial, and union between them has long seemed the only desirable goal for them both. Some of us were keenly disappointed that union between the Wesleyans and the S.I.U.C. did not follow the overtures of the latter Church years ago. It is in Bangalore alone that the two Churches are at work side by side, and, even there, union will involve no curtailment of the work of either. Between the churches in Bangalore there is close co-operation. United Evangelistic campaigns are carried on; there is occasional interchange of pulpits, and there is no bar to inter-communion; indeed, the real friendship and colleagueship prevailing between the staffs and the members of the two Churches should not much longer be denied its consummation in achieved union. One fruit of union, not yet brought about by friendly fellowship, might conceivably be the linking up of the two High Schools of the L.M.S. and the W.M.S. in a scheme either for the establishment of a Christian College, or for the closer co-operation and the greater Christian efficiency and influence of the present schools.

Were the practical difficulties of union throughout South India no greater than they are in the Kanarese field, union would not long be delayed. A large number in all the Churches concerned would say, 'What doth hinder?'

W. E. TOMLINSON.

What the Scheme means to the Telugu Field?

My association with the Joint Committee dates back only to 1929 and although this period marks perhaps the most important period in the history of the Joint Committee, I have felt the handicap of the lack of first-hand acquaintance with the first 8 or 10 years of the union movement. In this brief article I shall attempt to indicate what the effect of the negotiations has been on our area during the last few years and what the effect would be if the scheme were carried into operation.

The area covered by the Telugu section of the London Mission extends over a considerable portion of the Ceded districts including

Cuddapah, Kurnool, Gooty and Anantapur districts. Several missions not negotiating in the union proposals (eg., C.I.G. O.E.L. A.B.M.) are working on the various borders of our area. The S.P.G. Mission however for a period of about 100 years has occupied strips of territory within our borders and like ourselves has formed congregations from among Mala Outcastes. In fact a large number of S.P.G. converts can boast of having L.M. relatives in villages practically adjoining! and intermarriage is a frequent occurrence. On this ground alone therefore we may say that union in this area should be a perfectly natural issue.

Relationships existing between S.P.G. and L.M. workers have not always been as happy as they are to-day and to my mind the reason for the change is not hard to find. The beginning of union negotiations 12 years ago breathed forth a new spirit of tolerance and mutual understanding. Although the majority of workers in both Missions were for a long time practically ignorant of the nature of the negotiations the spirit behind the movement for union gradually found its way into their organisation, and experiments along the line of co-operation came to birth. For 3 or 4 years now S.P.G. agents have attended and co-operated in our teachers' annual meetings at Jammalamadugu and have held their Tirunala (Harvest Festival) in the same tope and at the same time as our larger one.

During the last 2 years actual joint discussions on the Union Scheme have done much to improve relationships and if, in definite matters of principle clear-cut differences have come to light, no small degree of bigotry engendered by entirely false notions has gone for good.

The endeavour to understand the Proposed Scheme has been retarded through lack of a Telugu translation. Only a minority of our workers have sufficient understanding of English to grasp the Joint Committee's publication. It is true that an explanation of the scheme has been available, but our leaders feel that it contained an Anglican bias and that an actual translation of the scheme was preferable. This is shortly to be made available, but until this is thoroughly understood by our people and further opportunities for discussion given, it would be wise to hold over a decision regarding the scheme in our Church Council.

It is not my object here to prophesy whether or not the scheme in anything like its present form is likely to be accepted by our Telugu Church Council. The majority of our leaders obviously feel very uneasy about certain points, and the recently published report of the Joint Commission on the scheme appointed in England by the L.M.S. and Congregational Union will result undoubtedly in a demand by our Council for several important amendments. One encouraging fact however remains, that a desire for organic union has been created.

Our people have caught the vision of a Christian Church in India, which shall be truly Indian, expressing the genius of an Eastern people.

Just at present also ideas of Swaposhana (Self-support) and Swaparipalana (Autonomy) are very much to the fore in all our thinking and planning, and we are not unmindful of the fact that these ideals would be brought a step nearer to realization if union with our S.P.G. friends were consummated.

We have cases where pastorates belonging to the two respective Missions practically overlap. In such cases union would mean the doubling of income plus the saving of a pastor's salary.

Apart, altogether from financial consideration I believe the coming together of the two Missions would result in very healthy reactions one upon the other. Each has something to teach, e.g. In the matter of orderliness, reverence in worship, and in the matter of giving regular instruction particularly to the adolescents who have much to learn. On the other hand our L.M. tradition certainly seems to foster a more self-reliant, independent and spontaneous type which the Indian Church of the future will need.

Finally signs are not wanting that a large movement towards Christianity among the other section of outcastes (Madigas) and perhaps the Sudras will shortly take place. Would not a strong Joint indigeneous Council be in far better position to deal with such an eventuality than two bodies with a divided witness?

It is natural either in political or religious circles that if any scheme is to be put into operation the public should at first be reluctant to receive it. Thus it is not surprising that the Telugu Church Council which all along has been accustomed to Congregational and Free Church methods of Government should hesitate to accept the new Episcopal form of Government, however Constitutional it may be. As long as we stand outside we are apt to magnify difficulties. Not many years ago when in accordance with a comity arrangement we exchanged some congregations with the S.P.G. there were grave misgivings in the minds of many of the people. At first the modes of worship etc. seemed strange but in the course of a decade they have settled down happily. In the same way many seeming obstacles will vanish away when once we take charge and step forward on the venture of faith. We believe that He who has led us so far will continue to lead us.

B. SAMUEL.

Extract from the 'Christian Century,' of Chicago July 1, 1931

The Lambeth Conference of Bishops declared last year in emphatic terms in favour of definite steps towards church union with non-episcopal communions on a basis which would not require anything like reordina-

tion. The general approval of the South India Scheme—whatever may be the merits of that scheme—definitely marks the abandonment of reordination as a prerequisite to complete fellowship in a reunited church. At the same time that scheme also marks an acceptance by non-episcopal churches of some form of episcopate, though this explicitly does not involve acceptance of any particular theory of the episcopate.

The Lambeth Conference asked that at an early date efforts be made to reopen conference with the English Free Churches on this or some similar scheme. But the recommendation also embraced other places and Canadians have wondered whether any action would be taken by the Anglican Church in Canada to implement the suggestion. The recommendation of the commission to the general synod is in favour of a preliminary conference with the United Church of Canada and exploration of the possibilities in this direction. The synod of the diocese of Toronto more openly gave unanimous and rather enthusiastic support to the proposal, and so, while there is a long way to go and many ravines to bridge, the direction is given for forward movements.

Correspondence

S.P.G. Mission,
Murlhun P.O.,
Ranchi District,
B.N.R.
31-5-31.

Editor, *Church Union News and Views.*

Dear Sir,

A good deal has been written in *Church Union News and Views* about the recognition of the validity of non-episcopal orders. But it is not clear in what sense the word 'valid' is used in this connection.

In any discussion on orders between Anglicans and Roman or Orthodox representatives validity is assumed to depend on the possession of Apostolic Succession and to guarantee the validity of the Sacrament; and a valid sacrament is taken to mean one in which the bread and wine at consecration become in some 'real' sense, and not merely figuratively or subjectively, the body and blood of Christ. It involves too the power of absolution (as in the Anglican Order for the Visitation of the Sick).

But I believe I am right in saying that most Free Church Ministers are not interested in the idea of Apostolic Succession, do not claim to 'consecrate' the bread and wine in the sacrament, and do not claim authority to give absolution.

In what sense then do they wish their orders to be recognised as valid? A formal statement on this point would remove many misconceptions.

Personally I am sorry that the word 'validity' has found its way into the amended scheme. I feel that it was a true instinct that kept it out of the original draft. I am in full sympathy with the remarks of your reviewer on page 86 of your second number. And I believe that the whole concept of validity has been built up on an idea of covenanted grace that is more Mosaic than Christian.

Yours faithfully,
G. C. GLOSSOP.

Clippings

Dr. Sheppard and the Presbyterians

We are informed by a correspondent, says *The Guardian* (London), that Dr. H. R. L. Sheppard, formerly of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, and now ex-Dean of Canterbury, on Sunday morning joined in the administration of the Communion according to the rite of the Presbyterian Church of England, at the invitation of the minister of Crouch Hill church. After conducting the first part of the service, Dr. A. Herbert Gray (the minister) took his place at the Communion table with the elders to his right and left, Dr. Sheppard occupying the seat immediately to the right of the minister. Dr. Gray carried through the rite until the bread had been distributed, and then the two ministers changed places and Dr. Sheppard set apart the wine and carried the service through to its close. Two women elders assisted in the distribution of the elements. Dr. Sheppard also preached at the evening service.

(Editorial from The Church Times)

Dr. Sheppard's gifts of personal fascination continue to be exercised in strange directions. The ordinary listener, finding that Dr. Sheppard derives an inspiration from the Gospel, which, like all true inspirations, he desires to pass on to others, rejoices in his influence without being much concerned with his ultimate principles and ecclesiastical judgment. As Churchmen, however, owing loyalty to a particular embodiment of the Christian tradition, we cannot but be rendered anxious by conduct which appears inconsistent both with the advice of the Bishops and with the elementary principles of Churchmanship, when it is exhibited by a figure so spectacular as that which Dr. Sheppard presents to the public. It is stated that the ex-Dean has recently taken part in a mixed Communion Service with some English Presbyterians; and the service was so far mixed that, while a Presbyterian divine performed the blessing of the bread, the celebrant was changed at that point, and Dr. Sheppard performed the blessing of the cup. Since it may be conjectured that none of the parties to this rite considered it to be more than a Love-Feast, or to involve any consecration, the actual harm done may be slight; but the scandal is serious. However great his attraction, Dr. Sheppard ought not to employ it to give romance to ecclesiastical filibustering.

The Archbishop's Invitation

The Conference of the Primitive Methodist Church in England decided in June last to respond favourably to the Archbishop of Canterbury's invitation to resume the Lambeth conversations. On the general principle the decision was most cordial. There was divided opinion, however, as to the conditions under which representatives should attend and their authority to commit the Church. Early speakers in the debate thought that the conversations should certainly begin where the former negotiations ended, with the clear and stated recognition of the validity of the Free Church ministry, and that they should approach the other side in a mood and attitude of 'no compromise.' On the other hand, later

speakers urged a condition of entire freedom, basing the claim upon the highest spiritual ground. Mr. Victor Murray put it that there should be room for the guidance of the Spirit of God, and another reminded the assembly that possibly some new ideas might emerge that no Church has yet seen. The Rev. J. M. Mantripp added his influence to the second position. He thought that the representatives should be unfettered. It would be good for the Anglicans to explore the Free Church side and for Free Churchmen to investigate with fresh minds the Anglican position. Mr. Moses Bourne, J. P., moved the Conference deeply by saying that it was most vital to the Free Churches that the 'validity' of the local preachers' 'orders' should be recognized. He felt his own call to preach to be as authoritative as that of any minister in that assembly or any clergyman in the Church of England. The debate clearly revealed a moving forward of the Church both in the spirit of Christian unity and in the understanding of the parties as regards the main points at issue. It was made quite clear that the representatives would have no power to commit the Church; everything must be decided by the Conference.

(From *The British Weekly*.)

Prospects for Union among American Methodists

The Commissions on Church Union of the Methodist Episcopal Church and the Methodist Protestant Church recently met in Chicago. The way seems clear for the ultimate union of these two bodies. The Commission's report 'that no obstacles are in the way of union and there is an insistent demand for union on the part of the laity.'' The Methodist Protestant Church split off from the mother Church after the General Conference of 1828 because of the autocratic methods of the Bishops and the refusal of General Conference to make democratic changes in the form of Church government. One of the leading members of the Methodist Protestant Church declared 'had the General Conference of 1828 granted to our fore-fathers half of the democratic changes which you have since incorporated in the Methodist Episcopal Church, there never would have been a Methodist Protestant Church.'' We hope this may be the beginning of an even wider reunion among the Methodist groups.

(from *The Indian Witness*).

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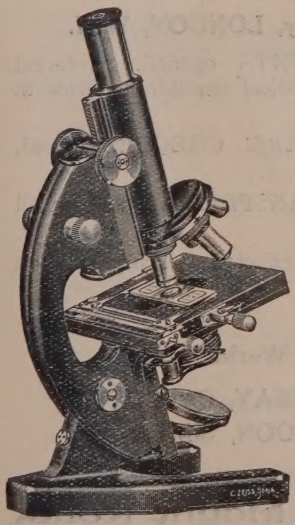

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